

FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Spring 2004 Newsletter

Wyden Proposes Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director
michael@gorgefriends.org

Conservation groups have worked for years to gain greater protection for the remaining roadless areas in Oregon, including the Columbia River Gorge, urging designation of these last remaining gems of Oregon's natural history as wilderness areas.

This spring, Senator Ron Wyden has stepped into the forefront with the "Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Proposal," calling for designation of 160,000 acres within the Mount Hood National Forest as protected wilderness. This includes approximately 35,000 acres of some of the most scenic and ecologically significant lands in the western Columbia Gorge, as well as additions to the Mount Hood, Badger Creek and Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness Areas.

In April, Senator Wyden sponsored public forums in Portland and Hood River to hear public comments regarding the wilderness proposal. More than 600 people attended the forums with 85% favoring Senator Wyden's proposal.

The Columbia Gorge deserves permanent protection so that future generations can experience its natural beauty. While the Gorge is partially protected by the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (Scenic Area Act), the only way to ensure permanent protection for its remaining roadless areas is to expand the areas designated as wilderness.

Senator Wyden's wilderness proposal includes National Forest lands between Larch Mountain and Mount Defiance in the

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Eagle Creek Canyon below Metlako Falls.

Photo: Oliver Dalton

Executive Director's Letter

At our annual meeting in March, Friends of the Columbia Gorge was given a gift unlike any we've received. It was from the family of Oliver Dalton, a long-time member who passed away last year.



Oliver Dalton in the Gorge.
Photo: Oliver Dalton

Oliver's widow Helen brought four albums to the meeting filled with 8" x 10" color photographs of the Gorge that Oliver took over a period of 30 years. I must admit that when I thanked Helen, I did not fully grasp the magnitude of this gift.

I have seen many beautiful photos of the Gorge, but never such an impressive compilation spanning every Gorge landscape and season. Photographing the Gorge is one of the greatest challenges an outdoor photographer can face. The lighting, the haze and the unnatural obtrusions make it a significant challenge. Many seek the great Gorge photograph and most fail.

Oliver had a wonderful eye and the tenacity to go where many photographers fear to tread, including dizzying heights and ice-covered trails. The albums are meticulously catalogued and each photo contains Oliver's brief and often witty narrative. We're told that after being diagnosed with melanoma Oliver's goal was to finish these albums. It was an enormous project, and the Dalton family lovingly completed his work.

I remember meeting Oliver Dalton on a member bus trip, and we made the usual small talk. After viewing his photos, I regret that I did not take the opportunity to get to know him better.

To thank the Dalton family for this gift, we're dedicating this newsletter to Oliver. As you will notice, the majority of this newsletter's photographs are his. Later this year we will add a number of his photos to our website for everyone to enjoy.

There he'll join other wonderful and generous Gorge photographers such as James Holloway and Ken Denis.

Over the years, many members have shown their great love for the Gorge after their deaths, whether through financial bequests, Gorge memorabilia, or in this case, treasured photo albums. These gifts give those of us still lucky enough to be enjoying the Gorge encouragement to forge ahead.

Sincerely,

Kevin Gorman
Executive Director

Mission Statement

Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

We fulfill this mission by ensuring strict implementation of the National Scenic Area Act; promoting responsible stewardship of Gorge lands and waters; encouraging public ownership of sensitive areas; educating the public about the unique natural values of the Columbia River Gorge and the importance of preserving those values; and working with groups and individuals to accomplish mutual preservation goals.

—Adopted November 20, 1997



Citizen Involvement Update

Friends' Outreach & Volunteer Happenings

By Betsy Toll, Volunteer Coordinator, betsy@gorgefriends.org

Volunteers Make the Difference

Friends' recreation programs, stewardship efforts, and Gorge protection advocacy work have all expanded considerably in the past three years. Active volunteers play a central role in our success.

Members and supporters volunteer their time, energy, and skills to make our increased strength possible. From citizens who write comment letters and testify at hearings, to hike leaders and stewardship volunteers, to a whole range of behind-the-scenes organizational support efforts, volunteers are essential to Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

Our volunteers bring different interests, life experience, skills, and concerns to their work. But they all share the desire that the children today and their grandchildren after them will have the magnificent

Columbia River Gorge to appreciate and enjoy. Volunteers lend their support in many ways:

Joe Earhart came to us as a volunteer systems administrator over a year ago. Every Thursday Joe spends his lunch hour, and occasionally time on weekends, providing invaluable support in our office, ironing out kinks in our computer systems, answering questions, installing programs, and troubleshooting technology issues for us.

Karen Foster took on the task of organizing hundreds of snapshots Friends has amassed over the years. Her efforts are yielding a useful archive of historic photos, classic panoramas and vistas, hikes, and public hearings, as well as development and land use documentation.

High school students, young parents, working professionals, and retirees all contribute to Friends' efforts. Alice Jones brought Grant High School friends out for stewardship workdays. Priscilla Hall and Carol Barnett have helped with stewardship, mailings, and attending public hearings. Dick Vetter serves on our Activities Committee, leads hikes, and is a stewardship volunteer.

Whatever your talents, interests, and skills, if you'd like to get involved, let us know. We'd love to have your help. Contact betsy@gorgefriends.org or call 503-241-3762 x103 for more information. ■



Above: Volunteer Joe Earhart and daughter Ella enjoy hiking whenever they get the chance.

Photo: Kama Simonds

Stewardship Work Parties

Stewardship volunteers are needed at Bridal Veil on June 5 and 26. Experience not necessary! For more information contact Cathy, 503-241-3762 x106, cathy@gorgefriends.org.

Volunteer Potluck Barbecue

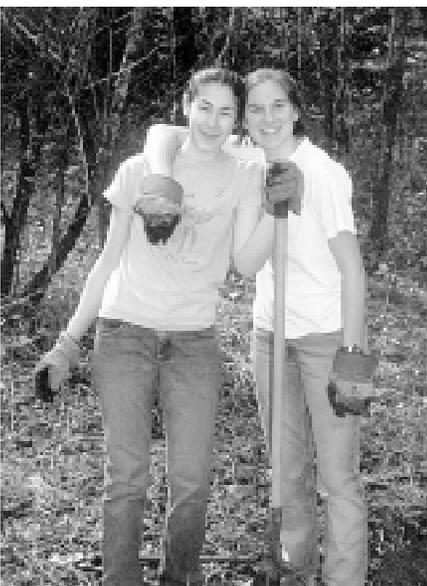
Saturday June 26

11:30-1:00 p.m.

Bridal Veil State Park

Our 2nd annual Volunteer Potluck Barbecue at Bridal Veil will follow a short work day on June 26.

Whether you write letters, help in the office, or pull blackberry, come join the fun! ■



Alice Jones (r) and a Grant High friend helped at Bridal Veil last spring.

Photo: Diana Karabut

Right: Dick Vetter is undaunted as he faces blackberry thickets at Bridal Veil.

Photo: Betsy Toll





Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

In the Courts and in the Field...

By Michael Lang, Conservation Director, michael@gorgefriends.org

Commission Adopts Revised Management Plan

The Gorge Commission has adopted a Revised Management Plan that allows more commercial and industrial uses in the Columbia Gorge, weakens protection for scenic landscapes, and fails to protect water quality and salmon habitat.

Here is a summary of the Commission's action:

Commercial Events: The Commission reversed itself again and adopted policies and guidelines to allow commercial events on most private land in the scenic area.

Stream buffers: The Commission dropped its proposal to weaken existing stream buffers, but a motion to adopt 300-foot buffers for fish-bearing streams

and 150-foot buffers for intermittent streams failed on a 3-9 vote.

Fish Processing Facilities:

Due to intense lobbying by Commissioner Dave Robertson (Oregon Governor appointee), the revised Plan will allow fish processing facilities and commercial fishing support structures in residential, forest, and agricultural zones. The Scenic Area Act prohibits industrial uses and development. Fish processing, boat building, and commercial storage are industrial uses.

Scenic resource protection:

The Commission weakened protection for scenic landscapes by deleting guidelines requiring development to be sited to minimize visibility using existing topography and vegetation.

The Commission failed to address the cumulative effect of new development on scenic landscapes, contrary to expert advice and to the requirements of the Act.

SMA Forest Practices: The Forest Service responded to public outcry over proposed rules to expand scenic area logging by limiting the size and number of clearcuts that may be approved in Special Management Area forests and increased protection for old growth trees. Still, the Forest Service refused to prohibit forest practices anywhere in the Columbia Gorge.

Friends is currently considering its options for legal challenges to the Revised Plan. ■

Tribes Pressure Governor to Approve Mega-Casino

Just four days after Senator Wyden's visionary proposal for wilderness was announced this March, casino advocates sent a letter to the Governor reaffirming their interest in building a casino the size of a Six Flags amusement park right next to the proposed wilderness area.

The casino proposal calls for a one-half-million-square-foot facility built on 25 acres along the Columbia River, with another 39 acres of paved parking. Casino backers plan to draw three million visitors per year. This would cause traffic congestion, unplanned growth, and increased air pollution in the Gorge.

Casino advocates with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs claim a right to build a casino on scenic trust land east of Hood River in hopes of convinc-

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Stream buffer decisions will affect streams like Ruckel Creek, shown here where the Ruckel Ridge route crosses on the Benson Plateau.

Photo: Oliver Dalton

New Faces, Fond Farewells

By Kevin Gorman, Executive Director kevin@gorgefriends.org

The staff and board of Friends of the Columbia Gorge have experienced transitions in recent months. The notes below introduce new staff and board members to bring our members up to date on the changes:

- Peter Cornelison of Hood River came on staff in December to work as half-time Field Representative in our Hood River office. Peter has been active in Hood River environmental issues for several years, including opposition to development of a super Wal-Mart in Hood River and a destination resort at Cooper Spur on Mount Hood. Peter replaces Joanie Thomson, who is now working to promote recreation in the Gorge.
- Teckla Anderson joined us in April as Development Assistant, replacing Kristin DeBenedetto, who left Friends to be a full-time mother to her new baby boy. Teckla previously worked with Standard Insurance and has non-profit

experience from her past administrative position with the Salvation Army.

- Katy Daily comes on staff in June as our Portland Conservation Organizer. Katy has a strong background organizing for the National Environmental Trust, the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and various electoral campaigns. Part of Katy's position will include handling responsibilities previously covered by Tiffany Kenslow, who has moved on to pursue other interests.
- At the March annual meeting, Friends' members officially welcomed three new board members: Ed Caswell, Janice Newton and Roger Wendlick. Ed is a long-time member of Friends and a former business owner. Janice is an urban planner and former member of the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee. Roger is an



Peter Cornelison (second from left), Friends' new Field Representative in Hood River, met with members on a hike at Major Creek this spring.

Photo: Diana Karabut

expert on Lewis and Clark who amassed the world's largest collection of Lewis and Clark memorabilia. Friends also said goodbye to founding board member Bill Bell, who stepped down after 23 years of service.

We extend our fond appreciation to one and all! ■



Phlox and sage brush.

Photo: Ken Denis

Conservation and Legal Program Highlights Casino...

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ing the Governor to approve a casino in Cascade Locks. This threat of a Hood River casino is an empty one.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) and other federal laws prohibit casino development on the Hood River trust land. The proposed site is not "Indian Land" as defined in IGRA because the Tribes have not exercised governmental powers over the land. The proposal also violates the National Scenic Area Act. For these reasons, the threat of a Hood River casino lacks merit and should not be used as a reason to approve a

Cascade Locks casino.

Write or call the Governor today and urge him to oppose a casino in the Columbia Gorge.

**Write or call the Governor today!
Urge him to oppose casino plans
and protect the Columbia Gorge.**

Governor Ted Kulongoski
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047
(503) 378-3111
http://governor.oregon.gov/Gov/contact_us.shtml ■



Funding Gorge Protection

Development Director's Report

By Jane Harris, Development Director, jane@gorgefriends.org

Lewis and Clark Explorer at the Annual Meeting

Friends members listened intently to stories told by George Drouillard at our annual meeting at Skamania Lodge in March. Drouillard was an interpreter and hunter who traveled with Lewis and Clark on the Voyage of Discovery, brought to life by Lewis and Clark scholar and Friends Board member Roger Wendlick. Wendlick offered a captivating one-man show and focused much of his presentation on the time the explorers spent near Skamania County.

The meeting was attended by more than 175 Friends members who heard Executive Director Kevin Gorman outline our 2003 successes, the need for continued Gorge land acquisition, and protection initiatives we will be working on in the year ahead. ■

Summer Picnic at Vineyard

A beautiful private estate in the eastern Gorge will be the site of this year's summer picnic

on Sunday, July 18. Activities will include a hike on the Klickitat Trail, so mark your calendars now and look for details to arrive in the mail. ■

Art in the Gorge

For a fun outing this summer, drive out to Hood River and enjoy the city's downtown "First Friday" celebration. Hood River's First Friday is a community-wide party with food, music, great shopping, people watching and, best of all, art gallery exhibits that showcase work by exceptional local and regional artists.

On Friday, August 6, Friends' Hood River office will get in the First Friday game with an open house. Artwork by Portland artist Christa Grimm will be for sale as a



This lovely home outside Lyle, WA will host Friends' summer picnic on July 18.
Photo: Jane Harris

benefit for Friends. Christa's bold colors and impressionist style celebrate landscapes in the Columbia Gorge.

Come and enjoy one of the Gorge's premier summer events. For more information, contact Peter in our Hood River office at 541-386-5268 or peter@gorgefriends.org. ■

Create a Lasting Legacy

Many members have made arrangements in their estate planning and wills to leave a gift to the Friends of the Columbia Gorge endowment. These gifts will remain in perpetuity, giving back to the Gorge year after year. For more information contact Jane Harris at 503-241-3762 x102. ■



Home Valley Park
Artist: Christa Grimm

Lewis and Clark Wilderness...

(continued from page 1)

central Gorge region. This 32-mile stretch holds stunning scenery, the highest concentration of waterfalls in North America, and the largest remaining old-growth forests in the Gorge. The proposal also includes 1,000 acres around Tom McCall Point, east of Mosier and home to more than 200 species of wildflowers, including four species endemic to the Columbia Gorge.

The Scenic Area Act requires protection and enhancement of scenic, natural, cultural and recreation resources but does not explicitly prohibit logging and development. Protection afforded to forests in the Gorge is subject to the goals of changing administrations and the shifting winds of politics in the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service.

Last fall, the Forest Service proposed revisions to the Columbia River Gorge Management Plan that would have allowed 15-acre clearcuts and "forest health" logging, even in the most pristine and wild areas in the Gorge. The Forest Service refused to explicitly prohibit "forest health" logging even in the most sensitive areas in the Gorge. Forest Service staff defended the proposal by explaining that the National Scenic Area Act intended for the Columbia Gorge to be a "working landscape," not a protected wilderness area.

By the end of January, more than 2,000 people wrote to the Forest Service, urging protection for remaining wild areas in the Gorge and an end to all logging. The Forest Service refused to designate even one single acre of forest as off-limits to logging but did agree to reduce the size of clearcuts in some areas and add some additional protective measures.

Administrative interpretation of the Act varies with changes in Forest Service staff and administrations in Washington DC. The Columbia Gorge needs an added layer of protection for remaining wild and

roadless areas to ensure they are forever protected from logging and development. Wilderness designation would provide that protection.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge supports this wilderness designation for all 160,000 acres identified in the proposal. In particular, all of the lands identified within the Columbia Gorge are long overdue for protection under the proposed wilderness act.

Wilderness supporters hope to have a bill introduced this Spring. Senator Wyden will need the support of the Oregon delegation, especially Senator Gordon Smith (R) and Congressman Greg Walden (R-District 2). Congressman Walden represents central and eastern Oregon, including parts of the Columbia River Gorge and Mount Hood National Forest.

Please write or call Senator Gordon Smith and Congressman Greg Walden and ask them to actively support the Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Proposal. Protecting Oregon's remaining wilderness gems, including parts of the Columbia Gorge, deserves strong bipartisan Congressional support.

Senator Gordon Smith

<http://gsmith.senate.gov/webform.htm>

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Know Your Gorge

Re-Discover the Columbia Gorge

Friends of the Columbia Gorge is adding an exhibit of the photos donated by Oliver Dalton's family (see *Executive Director letter*) to our website this spring.

Oliver's remarkable photography will enable our web visitors to enjoy trails and views of the Gorge well off the beaten path, and in seasons when most of us stay tucked warmly indoors. The site includes images from other fine photographers as well. Our web address is www.gorgefriends.org.

Oliver Dalton's Columbia Gorge albums contain hundreds of photos taken over three decades. Friends will continue to add Oliver Dalton photos to our website, so visit often in the coming year to enjoy new photos and updates. ■

A lone Ponderosa pine above an eastern Gorge view.

Photo: Oliver Dalton

